WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A folding tool, comprising:

a handle;

an implement pivotally coupled to the handle, the implement adapted to travel between a closed position and an open position and having a tang with a contoured surface; and

a spring arm having a first end coupled to the handle and a second end adapted to interact with the implement;

wherein the spring arm both exerts an opening force on the implement during at least a portion of the travel of the implement between the closed position and the open position and locks the implement into the open position.

2. The folding knife of claim 1, wherein the spring arm exerts the opening force on the implement via contact between the second end and the contoured surface.

3. The folding knife of claim 1, wherein the spring arm locks the implement into the open position via engagement with a portion of the contoured surface.

4. The folding knife of claim 3, wherein the spring arm must be manually disengaged from the portion of the contoured surface prior to rotation of the implement into the closed position.

5. The folding knife of claim 4, further comprising an unlocking mechanism configured to disengage the spring arm from the contoured surface.

6. The folding knife of claim 5, wherein the unlocking mechanism is an unlocking latch.

7. The folding knife of claim 1, further comprising a leaf spring coupled to the handle, the leaf spring adapted to bias the spring arm into a position locking the implement into the open position.

8. The folding knife of claim 1, wherein the spring arm exerts a closing force on the implement when the implement is in the closed position and the opening force on the implement when the implement is rotated several degrees away from the closed position.

9. The folding knife of claim 8, wherein the spring arm exerts the opening force on the implement when the implement is in the open position.

10. The folding knife of claim 9, wherein the implement is a blade.

11. The folding knife of claim 1, wherein the spring arm is in a plane defined by the implement.

12. The folding knife of claim 1, wherein the implement is a knife blade.

13. A folding knife, comprising:

a handle;

a blade pivotally coupled to the handle, the blade having a closed position and an open position and having a tang with a contoured surface; and

a spring located in a plane defined by the blade, the spring having a proximal end coupled to the handle and a distal end adapted to exert a force on the blade via contact with the contoured surface.

14. The folding knife of claim 13, wherein the spring locks the blade in the open position.

15. The folding knife of claim 14, further comprising an unlocking mechanism configured to release the blade from the open position.

16. The folding knife of claim 15, wherein the unlocking mechanism is an unlocking latch.

17. The folding knife of claim 13, wherein the spring exerts a closing force on the blade when the blade is in a first position and the spring exerts an opening force on the blade when the blade is in a second position.

18. The folding knife of claim 17, wherein the first position is any position in the range between the closed position and ten degrees of rotation away from the closed position.

19. The folding knife of claim 18, wherein the second position is any position in the range between the open position and ten degrees of rotation away from the closed position.

20. The folding knife of claim 13, wherein the spring comprises a pair of spring arms, each approximately half the width of the blade.